

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1, 2, 4, 11-13 and 15-17 remain in this application. Claim 1 has been amended herein. Claim 14 has been cancelled herein, and claims 3 and 5-10 were previously cancelled.

1. Drawings

The Examiner has indicated in the previous action of March 7, 2007 that the formal drawings submitted were approved.

2. Allowed Claims/Subject Matter

Applicant notes with appreciation that the Examiner has indicated the subject matter of claims 11 - 13 are patentable and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all of the limitation of the base claim and any intervening claims.

3. Section 103

Claims 1, 2, and 15 - 17 are currently rejected for obviousness over Suzuki, et al (JP 09-085075) in view of Swift, et al (US 4,670,404). Claim 1 has been amended herein to correct the typographical error noted by the Examiner (“arrange” is changed to “arranged”). No substantive change is intended.

The Examiner’s careful consideration of Applicant’s previous arguments relative to claim 1 is much appreciated. However, Applicant desires respectfully to traverse the Examiner’s interpretation of claim 1, based on the definition quoted by the Examiner in the presently outstanding Office Action.

Claim 1 recites in part that “the apparatus further comprises a heat conductive medium supporting the microreactor within the pressure vessel . . .” The definition quoted (on page 8 of the Office Action) for the word “support” is as follows:

2. to sustain or withstand (weight, pressure, strain, etc.) without giving way; serve as a prop for.

Adopting this definition of “support” for purposes of argument, the medium E in Sukuki still does not “support” the reactor as recited in claim 1. As the Examiner states in applying this definition to Suzuki, the function of medium E in Suzuki is to “sustain or withstand the pressure of the reactor” (emphasis added). This meaning of the verb “support” as “sustaining or withstanding” requires weight, pressure, strain, or the like as its object, hence the examples in the definition. Thus the “pressure” is the thing sustained or withstood by medium E in Suzuki, not the reactor as such. But claim 1 recites that the medium is supporting the reactor, not the pressure of the reactor. Thus the second half of the quoted definition is the only part that fits claim 1: the medium of claim 1 “serves as a prop” for the reactor, rather than “sustaining or withstanding” it. The medium of Suzuki, it is believed, cannot be said to “serve as a prop” in this way. (Applicant notes also that the “serve as a prop” definition is in general agreement with the first definition given by the same dictionary source: “to bear or hold up (a load, mass, structure, part, etc.); serve as a foundation for.” The first definition thus also appears to distinguish claim 1 from the Suzuki reference.)

The remaining pending claims all depend directly or indirectly from claim 1, and are thus allowable for at least this reason. (Claims 11-13 are additionally allowable for the reason(s) previously noted by the Examiner.)

4. Conclusion

Based upon the above amendments, remarks, and papers of records, applicant believes the pending claims of the above-captioned application are in allowable form and patentable over the prior art of record. Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Applicant believes that a three-month extension of time is necessary to make this Reply timely, and a request for such is submitted herewith. Should applicant be in error, applicant respectfully requests that the Office grant such time extension pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) as necessary to make this Reply timely, and hereby authorizes the Office to charge any necessary fee or surcharge with respect to said time extension to the deposit account of the undersigned firm of attorneys, Deposit Account 03-3325.

Appl No.: 10/659522
Response dated: August 10, 2009
Office Action dated: February 10, 2009



Please direct any questions or comments to Gregory V. Bean at 607-974-2698.

DATE: 10 Aug. 2009

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature of Gregory V. Bean, written in dark ink, positioned above a horizontal line.

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Gregory V. Bean